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Johnston, D. (2016). Travelling through the emotions: staging the erotic. *Palimpsestes*, 29, 1.
<https://doi.org/10.4000/palimpsestes.2283>

Published in:
Palimpsestes

Document Version:
Peer reviewed version

Queen's University Belfast - Research Portal:
[Link to publication record in Queen's University Belfast Research Portal](#)

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Travelling Through the Emotions: Staging the Erotic

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'Je ne deviens toi pour moi que dans l'émotion'
Gabriel Marcel, *Journal Métaphysique*

'Hay cosas encerradas detrás de los muros que no
pueden cambiar porque nadie las oye [...] Pero si
salieran de pronto y gritaran, llenarían el mundo'
Federico García Lorca, *Yerma*

Translation: the Embodied Subject

There is good reason why the philosophy of Gabriel Marcel should interest theorists and practitioners of translation alike. His rejection of the abstractions of Cartesianism and idealism on one hand, reinforced on the other by his increasingly marked concern with the complex life of physical human beings embedded in specific existential conditions not only connect him with the creative subjectivist tradition of thinkers like Kierkegaard, Bergson and Unamuno, but also mark a paradigm shift in his own thinking that situates him as a key forerunner of twentieth-century phenomenology. At the heart of his thought and method is the aspiration towards participation, a celebration of and investigation into the created relation that is the reward of trust, the opening up of the self into the lived experience of the other. Marcel's phenomenology is in this way inherently dialogical, offering a vivid discourse of encounter and connection as the instigators of an expansion of selfhood and augmentation of experience that derive from the body, and accrue significance primarily through sensation and affect. In his attempt to restore the force of intimacy denied by abstract thought, Marcel argues consistently that it is only through the emotions that human complicity is secured. His 'sensualist metaphysics' (Marcel 2002: xvi), to use the phrase of his English translator Robert Rosthal, depends, perhaps above all, on intersubjectivity as the lifeblood not solely of engagement but, more completely, of a holistic sense of interconnectedness. Rosthal, as translator, reflects upon Marcel's writing accordingly:

Suddenly, we find ourselves immersed in the language of intersubjectivity. Momentarily this may seem to be but a metaphor for self-world relations in general, but soon enough we realize that he really thinks that our relation with

other persons or selves is utterly fundamental to the matter in hand (Marcel 2002: x).

‘The matter in hand’ here is translation for Rosthal and encounter for Marcel, acts that may only take place in any meaningful way between one embodied subject and another. It is precisely this transaction between embodied subjects that both challenges and enables the translator, especially perhaps the translator for performance. ‘Theatre happens in the air’, playwright David Hare declares (24), referencing the energies and forces that connect the stage powerfully with the spectator. But these energies and forces that engineer the extratextual connections that are the heartbeat of performance are still rooted in our physical being and emotional responses. And, through that, they condition how we successively blend in and out of the world on stage—as we almost inevitably do. To paraphrase Marcel, therefore, it is through sensation and the emotions that we become complicit with performance, through their powerful pull that we keep coming back to that world on stage. None of this is to deny the place of reason: but, as for example Eric Bentley argues, a play is ‘a river of feeling’ in which—here he paraphrases Stanislavski— ‘reason, will and feeling always act together, simultaneously, and in close dependence on one another’ (3). It is in the tension between these motor forces of the inner life that the art of the actor lies, and in their interplay that spectator complicity is generated.

At around the same time as Marcel, W B Yeats was thinking about creativity in a similar way, depicting the life of the mind (‘this house’) as that of a tumult of making and re-making, of shaping and re-shaping, that derives from the creative tension between the competing impulses of the emotions (or passions) and intellect (or precision). His poem ‘Upon a House Shaken by the Land Agitation’ begins:

How should the world be luckier if this house,
Where passion and precision have been one
Time out of mind, became too ruinous
To breed the lidless eye that loves the sun? (77)

The image of the ‘lidless eye that loves the sun’ echoes his impatient exhortation to a wealthy man, who ‘promised a second Subscription to the Dublin Municipal Gallery if it were proved the People wanted Pictures’, to ‘look up into the sun’s eye’ (85). It is an invocation to push the senses to their limits and, indeed, beyond, into a sort of oneness, a ‘time out of mind’, like Marcel’s sensualist metaphysics or Hare’s ‘theatre in the air’, in which creativity and connectedness develop from time and space no

longer experienced as barriers to the embodied subject, but multiple spaces open to simultaneous habitation; as frontier zones to be manipulated by the imagination, available to being shaped and redefined through the translator-writer's union of passion and precision.

In Marcel's terms, and echoing the spirit of Yeats's address to the unwilling donor, encounter is only meaningful if it induces participation. In the case of theatre translation, securing the complicity of the spectator, connecting him or her to the material world on stage, is the first-order goal of the translator. If theatre indeed happens in the air, the spectator needs to be enabled as a participatory presence, not solely an observer but a co-creator of the full range of potential meanings and experiences that the stage world offers. The unswerving audience-orientation of translation for performance is easily caricatured as a stooping to conquer, but its outward gaze also reflects the most recent concerns of literary theory—traced by Terry Eagleton in three stages, moving from the Romantic preoccupation with authorship through a New Critical concern with text to a marked shift of attention in recent years towards the conditions of reception (74). Peter Rabinowitz underlines the point, arguing in his *Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation* that it is reader interpretation that conditions the life and afterlives of the text.

Translation: the Body

But in terms of theatre performance, what might we understand by the 'activities' of the spectator? In any context of performance we should begin by considering the force and impact of embodiment itself. Writing about the performativity of material religion, Angela Zito echoes the primary concerns of Marcel when she observes that 'the turn to embodiment has helped mitigate a legacy of over-reliance upon reason and intellect for forming an understanding of human life' (20). Zito's observation is general in its scope. But it is no less applicable to the contexts of translation and performance that concern us here. It is, for example, exactly what Kierkegaard seems to be suggesting when, in one of those paradoxes so beloved of the creative subjectivists, he imagined the actor to be saying to the writer "here is the original you were trying to copy" (quoted in States 1975: 126). For the theatre practitioner, no less than for Kierkegaard, Yeats and Marcel, it reminds us that the encounters created by theatre, which, in turn, compel and enrich spectator

attention, begin and end with the fact of embodiment. It is precisely the instantiation of the materiality of language in and through the physical presence of the actor that for Kierkegaard brings significance to the abstraction of text, and that evokes Marcel's 'émotion', Yeats's 'passion', and which for Hare charges the air in the auditorium with the energy of the encounter between the physical presence of the actor and that of the spectator.

It is in this encounter of embodied subjects, when words signify intensely within the heightened dynamics of the created relation between stage and auditorium, that characters acquire their truthfulness—meaning by that a quality of being that spectators are able to validate from their own experience or imagination. And in the process of acquiring this intensity of connection, such characters may begin to escape the conscious or professed intentions of their creators. Don Juan Tenorio, for instance, the anti-hero of Tirso de Molina's *El burlador de Sevilla* (*The Trickster of Seville*) outstrips the sermonizing proposition of Tirso the Mercedarian friar and comes alive on stage thanks to the materiality of the stage language provided for him by Tirso the playwright. Many of the plays of the Spanish Golden Age straddle the sort of doubleness that enables such transcendence, forcing their spectators to confront the workings of codified authority while simultaneously plunging them into the maelstrom of physical subterfuge, scheming, pretence, masks, and disguise. Echoing Victor Turner's discussion of the liminal in art, this liminality is one of the great underlying realities of these plays. Chaos and order, collapse and structure, sin and retribution, sex and denial are the powerful cornerstones of this beautifully mapped theatre world.

The Trickster of Seville and The Guest of Stone, to give it its full title, was probably first performed around 1616 but not published until 1630. It is the earliest surviving dramatization of the Don Juan myth, subsequently picked up by artists like Molière, Mozart and, in the twentieth century, Horváth. It is highly likely that Tirso first fixed on the legend of the trickster-lover, in whatever form it was already circulating, in order to create and flesh out—a metaphor never more tellingly coined—a sermonized account of the perils of carnal temptation. But the play in performance works against the grain of this authorial intention. *The Trickster of Seville* ranks among the finest tragedies written anywhere, one that still echoes powerfully within our contemporary condition. And it does so in spite of its theology of sin and retribution, its outworking of Christian inevitability—Don Juan is finally

dragged down to hell by the statue of a nobleman, Don Gonzalo, murdered by Don Juan as he tried to defend his daughter. Rather it is because of the way it dramatizes social and moral breakdown against a savagely depicted background of deception, distress and real despair. It is towards this state of disorder that many Golden Age plays nudge their audiences, towards the dark attraction of anarchy and chaos. This is the liminal space that these plays open up, a space where anything is possible, an eroticized space in which the self divests itself of responsibility and opens up fully to whatever opportunity may come its way.

Viewed from this perspective, the liminal space is a darkly attractive one. Moreover, we should remember that these were plays performed by professional actors, who relished their roles, who performed with their bodies no less than their minds. The physical vitality of the lovers they portrayed on stage resonated—and continues to resonate—with equally embodied spectators. In the most literal sense, Don Juan became the embodiment of the urge to indulge, to cross the line; sin becomes transgression, transgression becomes excitement, and the myth of the great lover is born. Effectively, then, the play has been eroticized in performance, so that what the translator is faced with is not only a text (which, after all, is a highly abstract mechanism for bearing and transmitting information), but also an accumulated performance tradition that surrounds that text, its ‘aura’, to borrow a term from Benjamin (217-251). Translation for performance, in that sense, does not engage simply in a process of textual transfer, but rather enables the abstraction of the page to become physical on stage, to be made flesh. In the case of *The Trickster of Seville* the translator needs to be at least as aware of what is in the air, of those energies and forces that condition complicity, as of the notional meanings of the signifiers on the page. Complicity itself, of course, is complex: it depends on intimate connections between the spectator’s physical presence and their cognitive processing, as Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (2002) have argued, connections that manifest themselves as felt emotions that condition how we ultimately decide, discern, relate and evaluate what it is we’re seeing. How is the translator to encode these conditioning factors of performance into his or her new translation? What is certain is that the consequence of not doing so will be some sort of playtext manqué.

This is how Michael Kidd’s translation of *The Trickster of Seville* begins:

Enter Don Juan and Duchess Isabella.

ISABELLA: Duke Octavio, this way will lead you out more safely.

DON JUAN: Duchess, I again promise you my hand in marriage.
 ISABELLA: Are so many promises, offerings, gifts, compliments, and expressions of goodwill and friendship to be trusted, my dear?
 DON JUAN: Yes, my love.
 ISABELLA: I wish to light a candle.
 DON JUAN: What for?
 ISABELLA: So that my soul may bear witness to the rapture I've just experienced.
 DON JUAN: I'll extinguish your light!
 ISABELLA: Oh, heavens! Who are you, man?
 DON JUAN: Who? Just a man, no name.
 ISABELLA: You mean you're not the duke?
 DON JUAN: No.
 ISABELLA: Palace guards, come quickly!
 DON JUAN: Stop! Give me your hand, duchess.
 ISABELLA: Don't touch me, you swine! Where are the King's ministers! Soldiers, anyone, help!

The translation offers an account of the scene that in its evocation of time is confused and therefore confusing. The Duchess's reference to 'promises, offerings, gifts, compliments, and expressions of goodwill and friendship' is presented largely as a thesaurus-driven listing of items of generosity which, although it does not wholly elide the sexual act that has just taken place, does little to materialize it in the experience of the spectator. Moreover, lexical choices such as 'My dear', 'Oh, heavens!', 'Just a man, no name' and 'you swine' present an interpretant, in Peirce's sense, that is rich in nostalgia for an era when trapped lives might have contemplated adultery, but would have immediately discarded the possibility of such brief encounters as improper and disturbing in equal measure.

My translation stems from a different interpretant. The scene demands materiality, the impact of physical presence:

Darkness. Don Juan Tenorio and Isabela, a Duchess.

ISABELA: Duke Octavio, leave through here – it's safer.
 JUAN: My lady, you have my word, we will marry.
 ISABELA: My love, so happy am I, I hardly dare believe your soft words and whispered promises.
 JUAN: Believe them.
 ISABELA: Let me light the lamp.
 JUAN: What for?
 ISABELA: For my soul to give faith to the joy I have just experienced.
 JUAN: You light the lamp, and I'll kill it.
 ISABELA: God in heaven! Who are you?
 JUAN: Who am I? A man with no name.

ISABELA: You're not the Duke...
 JUAN: No.
 ISABELA: Guards!
 JUAN: Hold still. Give me your hand, Duchess..
 ISABELA: Don't touch me, unclean bastard! Your Majesty! Guards!
 Anyone! (Johnston 2015: 61-62)

The iconography of the scene in this translation—the occasion of sin, the darkness, the man with no name, his loathing of the light, his uncleanness—colludes in the intimation that this is the devil incarnate. Of course, the devil had long been embodied in the form of the Trickster, the stealer of souls and the purloiner of reputations, so that as Don Juan travels from Italy and into Spain in search of new victims, it is as though the devil is set loose upon the world. The interpretant in this case, one might venture, is that of a sensualist metaphysics.

Translation: Time and Space

Tirso, both as a teller of morality tales and a playwright, knew of course that embodied experience is central to how human beings understand the world. What he could not have foreseen is the extent to which embodiment itself, the conditions of physicality, would be far more influential in shaping the afterlives of the play than the text's appeals to authority as a regulator of those conditions. Such regulation—exercised for Tirso on earth through the honour code of men and by the implacable eye of God in heaven—functions within the specific relationship between the body and the particular coordinates of time and space in which the play is set. But if time, space and the body are intimately interconnected dimensions of being, as this implies, they still specify a subjectivist ontology in which emotion, thought and meaning are shifting, processual, and emerging, rather than fixed—suggesting, in other words, that the experience and representation of the body itself are constructed and alternatively liberated, or controlled, by the various and multiple experiences offered by time and space. In that way translation, both as a practice and as a way of thinking about relationships, offers its own meditation on how time, space and the body are understood, constructed and, ultimately, connected at the level of both subjective experience (in terms of cognitive and affective processes, and the different restraints that may be placed upon them) and the external body (in terms of how it presents itself and is represented in public space).

So how might acts of translation prompt towards a fulfilment of the conditions

of presence, so that, even momentarily, we might bend time and space to our will, to the force of our desire to become fully present in our own body? Part of the answer will surely be found in how the word in translation becomes infinitely enriched by the way it embodies its own journey across time and space, enabling the most unexpected of connections. It prompts the emotion of recognition of ourselves in something from the past or from elsewhere, so that we become connected, viscerally and experientially, to something we had thought to be long dead to us, but no less real for that. Surely there is a sense of 'jouissance' in such connections, in the sense that Barthes gives the word of a physical response rather than an emotional condition? It is present in the highly-charged thrill of moving through this liminal space towards something at first only vaguely glimpsed, but outside the self and always compelling. The interpretant that Kidd supplies to his translation of *The Trickster of Seville* is a nostalgic one, anxious to assert the historicity of the play he is translating, and through that solely backward glance there is a danger that the translator will excise the possibility of connections that are visceral, experiential, exciting. In short, Kidd's translation presents a play that is manqué, somehow disembodied. Slavoj Žižek argues in this respect that 'the most succinct definition of historicism [...] is historicity minus the unhistorical kernel of the Real—and the function of the nostalgic image is precisely to fill out the empty space of this exclusion, i.e. the blind spot of historicism' (79). Here we can understand the 'Real' in terms of Bentley's 'river of feeling', the confluence of reason, will and emotion that are both structured by time and space, and that at the same time subjectivise them. Žižek's idea of the unhistorical kernel of the real, that is the lived experience that is absent from the historiographical account of time and space, is useful in understanding the attempts of the translator to recreate something of the complexity of lives that are lost to us in a way that touches upon our own contemporary experience—in other words, to work within the possibilities of simultaneity, of concurrence, rather than gazing wistfully down the long tunnel of time towards the distant text. But, of course, there is a difficulty here: the paradox of translation is that the translator is writing something that is absent or lost, echoing Valéry's characterization of the relationship between thought and writing as

une modification, une transformation, brusque ou non, spontanée ou non, laborieuse ou non, qui s'interpose, nécessairement entre cette pensée productrice d'idées, cette activité et cette multiplicité de questions et de résolutions intérieures; et puis, ces discours si différents des discours

ordinaries que sont les vers, ne parlent jamais que de choses absentes' (1324).

Just as Valéry's poetry is fired by absence, a bulwark against the intimation of loss, so translation as a writing practice only really begins when translators turn their back on a text that is culturally and linguistically resistant to yielding its secrets and turn instead to the living core of individual experience encoded within that text.

The translator engages on behalf of the present, the new receiving context, with the sweep and scope of lives that linguistically, culturally, historically, and theatrically are lost to us, or at least differ radically from the uses, assumptions, and practices of our own lives. In other words, the theatre translator is concerned with—and, of course, concerned by—the play as an object that is other to us, but such alterity is not conceived of as a barrier to understanding but rather it becomes the liminal territory in which the challenge to *really* translate is undertaken, where time and space themselves become malleable tools of the translator's imagination, with and through which translators engineer connection. The act of translation, therefore, does not take place within the set parameters of either an uncomplicated textual strategy—whether of professed fidelity or of wholesale domestication—or indeed within the norms of a specific moment or location. It is neither subject to or aloof from the world of the text, but rather is a balancing act that moves from textual authority to reader (or spectator) response, enabling more conventional understandings of the text to fold into and energise subjective responses. But in the act of translation neither that original world or the claims of the new spectator function as an absolute imperative. The charge of translation occurs when it enables engagement with distant experience, so that through the deceitful synchronicities of translation, which of course, are also the deceitful synchronicities of theatre itself, the living and the dead may come together in, and share, this unhistorical kernel of the 'Real'.

Translation: the Erotic

It is useful shorthand to refer to two broadly different types of theatre translation: one the product of the translator who engages in a philologically-oriented translation that is concerned with context and driven by nostalgia for the absent text; the other written by the translator who enters the text and produces a translation that emerges as a continuum of transformation between the text and his or her life. It is the

work of a translator who is nostalgic for the humanity embedded in the original, and now absent. The resulting translation is a merged text, meaning that it inevitably reflects choices made from translators' own lived experience and, in particular, the lived experience that they share with their intended audiences. The resulting text emerges from the original, but is not redolent with it. Rather it is open to be experienced and performed as neither from here or there, then or now, but hybrid and ephemeral, still a text in its own right—an act of remembrance infused with presentness so that the spectator is translated backwards and forwards, both present and connected.

In that analysis, it seems that there may be something common to the promises of translation and erotic experience alike. Essentially, it is what Georges Bataille, in *Eroticism*, identified as the contrast to self-possession, the antidote to our discontinuous mode of existence as defined and separate individuals. In other words, translations and the erotic seem to offer a possible re-integration of self that comes from the outworking of the quest for a continuance of being beyond the confines and constraints of the rational. We are prised open by the manipulation of time and space, opened out to a state of encounter, and, through encounter offered the possibility of a sort of continuity. Walter Benjamin noted the subjectivised and subjectivising nature of the time continuum, but in his central notion that 'it is entirely possible that in disavowing my past I establish a continuity with the past of somebody else' he points towards a deeper and more intense form of human connectedness (quoted by Hanssen: 32). As always with Benjamin's account of translation, there is a lingering mysticism here, an intimation of the beyondness that is attainable only when the self surrenders its pretensions to self-containment.

The principal difficulty about erotic writing, the point at which it frequently marauds into the mawkish or the metaphorically contorted, is precisely this attempt to capture in language something that is characterized by beyondness—a sense of beyondness that has writers searching for new figurative expression whose heuristic force, it is hoped, will project the reader into the same tingling world where time and space melt before more intensely immediate categories of experience. Both translation and the erotic assert themselves in the ether of a different experience of time and space—in the substance of the translation that, in the best of cases, offers the conditions of encounter, a sort of embrace with something beyond ourselves, and via the intimacy of the erotic moment that shapes and re-shapes the contours of time and

space themselves. In that regard there is something utopian about both the practices of translation—as Stephen Kelly has argued (2007)—and the rituals of the erotic—in the way that Olga Matich describes them (2005). If such practices and rituals are to be effective as pieces of writing, much depends upon the qualities of expression they bring to core questions about how human beings may rupture self-containment, questions about how we might fulfil the conditions of a heightened presence, a being in ourselves and for others that asserts itself irrespective of time and space. Is that not after all the promise that translation and erotic experience alike seem to hold out? A transcendence of the limits of time and space. A momentary, but significant beyondness.

These are promises that prompt what Bataille refers to as ‘stirrings’ (19), stirrings within us that, in turn, like stirrings in the body or body politic, prompt a resistance that formulates itself through invocations of the dangers of excess. It is a resistance that articulates itself through a code of binary oppositions—honour/dishonour, continuity of being / self-containment, expansion of selfhood / closure and enclosure, body / mind—a discourse made all the more powerful because its individual signs are necessarily simple, notionally safer, reminding us constantly that separateness and silence stand there before us, offering greater security and ultimately more real than the perils of contact, communication and encounter. We yearn for an extension of ourselves, but everything reminds us of our discontinuity. And so we commodify. We commodify translation. We commodify the erotic. We commodify emotions. To echo Berman, commodification has become one of the most testing trials of the foreign.

The commodification of translated text is in itself not a new phenomenon. In the first decade of the twentieth-century, for example, in an age of imperial expansion when collecting exotic artifacts was a popular cultural pastime, eminent critic E. F. Spence had already satirized the influx of foreign-language productions:

We have had plays in Russian, Japanese, Bavarian patois, Dutch, German, French and Italian, to say nothing of East End performances in Hebrew and Yiddish [...] A Greek company came to the Court but did not act. A Chinese has been promised and a Turkish drama threatened; Danish has been given; there are awful hopes of Gaelic and Erse; and goodness knows why we have escaped Echegaray, Lope de Vega and Calderon in the original.

At the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries, similar qualms have been expressed by critics and writers, captured most vividly perhaps in Howard Brenton's recent dismissal of 'library theatre'. Like Spence, Brenton is made uneasy by the multicultural foodfest of London programming, where encounter with the foreign is diluted into 'sexed-up versions' (quoted by Morrison). Frequently designated as adaptations or new versions, terms notionally geared to overcome the discourse of resistance, separateness and enclosure, these are translations where the aspiration towards connection with a subject that is other to us is abandoned in favour of contemplation of an object that is well known. Simply programming plays from elsewhere as a nod in the direction of a liberal and clichéd multicultural ethics, while subjecting the same plays in performance to treatments that either leave them exoticised or assimilated to target-culture norms and expectations, robs both theatre and translation of their stirring capacity for 'unheimlich' (Freud's 'uncanny'). It strips away that deeper stirring of the translation-effect when the spectator feels an unexpected connection with something from beyond his or her life.

Translation: the Connection

Connection is the key word in all of this. Connection is central to the enriched subjectivity of Marcel, the creative impulse of Yeats, the sacred materiality of Bataille, and marks the ultimate trajectory of Žižek's 'Real'. If we return to Freud's notion of the 'unheimlich' not just as a source of disturbance, but also of connection, we should ask how translated plays in performance might really engineer moments of sufficient intensity to fulfil the conditions of encounter that these thinkers suggest is one of the most precious fulfilments of the human condition.

Every performance, like every translation, offers the potential for the creation of rich points of contact, moments of intense recognition when, to paraphrase Marcel, spectators might feel through emotional engagement that they are also intimately concerned in the matter. Whether or not the translator or the actors fully realise such potentials under the conditions of performance is, of course, another question. These rich points of contact function within the organism of the translation-spectator relationship like synapses, quickfire impulses that travel from stage to spectator. And in doing so, they enable intense connections within and beyond the body through the process of homologous recombination that establishes the similarity (crucially not the sameness) of molecules, and through the cross-over of that impulse repairs potentially

damaging instances of break or rupture. In other words, synapse functions like a healing shock to the system by stimulating disconnected molecules to recognise what they have in common with other molecules. If translation is able to function most intensely through the provision of synaptic connections, it is because what is at the heart of the matter is the DNA of humanity itself.

The Spanish poet and dramatist Federico García Lorca places this notion of electrifying connection at the heart of his work. Drawing on a range of sources, including popular folklore and the work of subjectivists like Unamuno, García Lorca develops a theory of reception that has now become virtually synonymous with his writing style, that of 'duende'. The origins of the word are obscure, although it is quite possible that it combines 'don' and 'de', meaning the 'lord of the [house]', so that the effect becomes homologous with that of a spirit within the body, a force beyond reason. A more fanciful characterisation might dub it the poltergeist effect of the emotion. If this is indeed a correct attribution, it provides a compelling but much farther-reaching echo of Yeats's house as the life of the mind, shaken by an emotional response to art. It is interesting in this regard that both Lorca and Yeats turned to popular music—flamenco and traditional Irish respectively—as a source of the sort of truthfulness that comes from peoples whose cultures are sharpened by diaspora and hardship. Lorca first developed the aesthetics of duende in a lecture he gave in Argentina in 1933, 'Play and Theory of the Duende'. Well-known Lorca scholar Christopher Maurer discusses the interplay of a series of elements within Lorca's duende, characterising them in terms of irrationality, earthiness, a heightened awareness of death, and an intimation of the diabolical (Lorca 1998: Preface). In a way, however, this is too neat, too clear cut. All of these elements are statements of interconnected excess, a surrender to Bataille's 'stirrings', a bodily response to the synaptic connections created by the encounter with beyondness, whether of the senses, the emotions, or indeed of death itself. For Lorca, performance is a crucible—people often refer to the 'pressure-cooker' or 'hothouse' feel of his theatre, both in terms of the characteristic entrapment of its protagonists and of the emotional complicity (the counter-reaction of a yearning for freedom) that this entrapment is designed to excite in its spectators. In this sense, performance is the key to an impact that derives from emotional response, an impact whose goal is to extend and deepen the spectator's experience of sources of emotional anarchy and societal control. His conception of theatre as 'poetry that stands up from the page and becomes human, and

in doing so, it talks and it cries and it weeps and it despairs' (my translation, Lorca 1980: 1215) echoes Marcel in the way that Lorca sees connection beginning and ending with embodiment, connection that is established through emotionally-charged language that makes what is invisible or repressed in both body and body politic visible in the form of a human body on stage.

Like Valéry, Lorca strove to make visible on stage those energies and forces of the individual life silenced by and absent from the dominant codes and discourse of public morality. His richly imagistic drama is geared precisely towards disrupting the established discourse of behaviourism with forceful expressions of the intimate self, of the right to be. The real artistic achievement of Lorca's theatre is the speaking of what Marcuse was to call thirty years later a 'non-reified' language (66-68), a way of communicating the intimate denied as an absence both deeply felt in the individual life and the defining reality of a public space delimited by the spirit of conservatism and negation. Importantly, his is a gaze from the margins. As a gay writer, Lorca obliges his audiences to undertake a journey into the recognition and acceptance of alternative or denied expressions of sexuality, both as a taboo area of public life and as a metaphorical way of apprehending the wider frustrations and limitations of community life. In his plays, accordingly, he disrupts the linguistic no less than the cultural codes of Spanish, exciting cultural exogamy in his dramatisation of recognisable forms and modes of the hostile otherness that he himself experienced in his life both as an individual and as a cultural figure.

In Act Three of *Blood Wedding*, arguably his most iconic play in this regard, the runaway lovers, Leonardo and the Bride, find themselves in a scene that Lorca's stage directions describe as of 'great sensuality'. In this moment of intimacy, snatched between the brooding ritual of the wedding, from which they have fled, and the approach of imminent death, in the form of angry retribution, their physical being is transformed and liberated by their force of feeling. A. S. Kline's 2007 translation of a key exchange from that highly-charged moment reads:

LEONARDO:	The birds of the morning are stirring in the trees. The night itself is dying in a hard edge of stone. Let's find some dark corner, where I can always love you, where people will not matter nor the venom they engender.
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BRIDE: And I'll sleep at your feet
 to watch over your dreams.
 naked, I'll lie on the ground,
 just like a bitch on heat. *Dramatically.*
 That's what I am! I see you
 and your beauty makes me burn.

The lovers—metonymic projections of society's fear of its own latent potential for excess—are being hunted down, pursued in an act of retribution that echoes the reduction to 'bare life' of Agamben's 'homo sacer'. But it is precisely in this condition, where life is distilled to sheer physical presence, that Lorca's characters begin to identify the animal calling of their repressed sexuality. The Bride describes herself explicitly as 'a bitch in heat', while Leonardo looks to take refuge in a 'dark corner'. In that sense, in this moment of heightened erotic tension, Leonardo, like Don Juan, assumes a different quality of being, expressed in this case by the leonine overtones of his name (indeed, he is the only character in the play who is not simply designated through a social function, such as Bride or Bridegroom). This animal presence is more than a pervasive note; it is the underpinning metaphor that envisages entry to a different quality of being, in which time and space fuse into a moment of stillness. It is this metaphor that provides the translator with one possible interpretant.

In the case of Kline's translation, the shift into temporal continuity ('where I can always love you'), coupled with the romanticized cliché of watching 'over your dreams' and high-register lexical choices ('the venom they engender'), defuses the moment, re-activates the normal flow of time, and inflects the animal metaphor into a much more self-consciously poetic discourse. My translation attempts to respond to the scene's invocation of duende:

LEONARDO: The birds are stirring in the trees.
 Dawn's about to break.
 Let's go from here,
 to some dark place
 where we can lie together
 far from whispering tongues.

BRIDE: And I'll lie at your feet
 watching you sleep,
 naked, lying on the land,
 like a bitch in heat. Because
 that's what I am. I look at you
 and I feel myself burn (Lorca 1988: 82).

Translational choices here emphasise contact with the earth ('place' rather than 'corner', 'land' rather than 'ground'), the intense present moment of the desired sexual encounter, and the sensuality of the act of possession suggested by the freedom to 'look' (rather than the accidental act of seeing). The excerpt itself is fashioned from Lorca's fascination with the intensity of the erotic moment, in which loss of self-containment and the breaching of enclosure are simultaneously deeply desired as the fulfilment of continuity and connection, and feared as the correlative of social destruction, distress and, ultimately, death. The scene balances on a moment of transition, from socially recognizable beings (Bride) to creatures of passion ('naked, lying on the land, / like a bitch in heat'), and in doing so offers a powerful image of connectedness, the momentary fulfilment of Bataille's 'lost continuity' (17).

Translation: the Act of Naming

Such fulfilment is momentary, both because the moment is unsustainable and because, even within the fictional world that Lorca so carefully fashions for these lovers from his own sense of isolation and disconnectedness, erotic consummation remains most intense at the level of insinuation. Lorca's plays are powerful in performance, perhaps above all else, because they insinuate possibility, they bring the invisible into half-glimpsed stage focus, they hold out the promise of giving a name to what is denied, an act of naming, verbally or performatively, that is geared to connect with the spectator at the most visceral level.

One final example, taken from *Doña Rosita, the Spinster*, written three years after *Blood Wedding*, in 1935, dramatizes this idea of the spectator not only as traveller within and but also co-creator of this liminal space of the emotions, in which the absent and the invisible constantly yearn to become manifest and present. In the oppressive Victorian world of a gloomy Granada house, a young woman is wasting her life, fruitlessly waiting for the return of the young man to whom she has promised her hand. Her fate is, of course, announced in the name of the play itself, so that the story becomes an extended meditation on the way in which marriage as a contract and love as a set of constructed expectations fail to fulfil the promises they extend. In other words, although the setting of the play is now remote from us, the emotional truth that the actor may well draw upon to validate her performance is that of a woman who has been betrayed not just by a man, but by a series of abstract codes; it is that same core experience that will fruitfully serve the translator in their re-creation

of that sense of a house where agency has stopped and assumed visible form in the paralysed life of this young woman. The unspoken reality of this particular Genetrix is that she has been condemned, both by her own misreading of her feckless fiancé and by the codes of her society, into a sexless existence, divorced from all pleasure. Like the dramatists of the Golden Age, Lorca frequently used servants to voice the unspoken, and early in the play the Housekeeper recites a daring tongue-twister whose ostensible meaning is that, like nuns, she is on the go from dawn to dusk:

Siempre del coro al caño y del caño al coro; del coro al caño y del caño al coro (Lorca 1980: 750)

But the latent content it implants in the audience's mind is 'coño', the slang word for the female genitalia. In his version John Edmunds tries this 'She never stops: in and out and round about and in my lady's chamber' subsequently adjusting the following dialogue to have her mistress, Rosita's aunt, retort reprovingly 'If you knew what that meant, you wouldn't say it' (Lorca 2009 :176-177).

Unfortunately, what is lost here is the materiality of the name, that nudging of the audience towards the co-creation of an act of naming so that the spectator becomes complicitous in some way with the most intimate and visceral expression of that force of desire locked away. In consequence, Edmunds's translation lacks impact. It presents a meaning that has to be deduced rather than one that erupts unbidden within the spectator's consciousness. Moreover, the loss of reference to the world of nuns erodes an important correlative for Rosita's arid existence. Another version attempts to keep those referential elements explicitly alive. 'Coro' refers to the choir stalls of the church, and 'caño' to the fountain where the washing is done. The resulting 'from shout to sheet, from sheet to shout' provides a graphic illustration of the limitations of word-based analysis (Lorca 1965: 134). Not only does it evoke behaviour most unlikely in a nun, but the act of naming that it prompts is also singularly inappropriate.

Lorca's work provides a striking example of the capacity of theatre to stir emotion beyond the constraining bulwark of reason. In that way, although Lorca is closer to Yeats than to Ibsen in his predilection for a theatre of ritual rather than of rational exposition, whatever Apollonian overtone there is to Yeats's 'lidless eye that loves the sun' is absent from the Dionysian return to physicality that lies at the heart of Lorca's duende. It is precisely the call of the physical that his theatre seeks to name. It may be that in Lorca's tragic universe sensuality exists always in dyadic

tension with death, the act of naming always struggling against the grain of silence. But without this attempt to return to this most intimate expression of selfhood, to reassert the connective tissue of being for another, Žižek's 'unhistorical kernel of the Real' remains elided. And, of course, it is precisely this kernel to which the actor seeks to give embodiment, to make available the physical form that is the final repository of the cognitive and affective processes of any actor's preparation.

In short, the physical presence of the actor is, of course, essential to all of this. But it is the translator's task to provide the scaffolding for this performance, to enable the actor to make the audience feel that something intimate and unnamed is physically present on stage both in the embodiment of the actor and the materiality of language. The centrality of this to the task of translating Lorca's theatre is clear. But all theatre is embodied transaction, and there are key moments of so many plays—their rich points of contact—that depend on the translator's awareness of the need to engineer access for the spectator to the intensity of participation celebrated by Marcel. Otherwise, foreign plays in translation can so easily remain marooned in time or place-bound isolation, experienced as no more meaningful in the individual life than cyphers of abstract thought.

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